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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

10 September 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR THE BOARD

SUBJECT: Assumptions for NIE 11-9-54

1. In connection with the draft Terms of Reference for NIE 11-9-54 "Soviet Air Defense Capabilities", now before the Board, I suggest that we should attempt to meet the criticism levied at the last version of this exercise, SIE-5. When SIE-5 came before the IAC it was criticized, not wholly fairly, as being not a capabilities estimate but merely an "inventory" of Soviet air defense assets. We were forced to change the title and include a foreword to this effect. This problem arose partly because we could not write a "net capabilities" study, and the DCI expressed the hope that the next revision of the study could be a "net" exercise.

2. While it is probably still not possible to do a "net" analysis, there is one step we can take to make NIE 11-9-54 more realistic and useful. Much of the controversy in SIE-5 arose over Soviet capabilities against various types and scales of attack. Could we not ask the Joint Staff to provide us with simply a generalized list of the various types and over-all scales of attack which the Soviets might have to meet, i.e. high level attacks at _____ to _____ feet, low level attacks at _____ to _____ feet, night or all-weather attacks of various types; single aircraft attacks vs. multiple or saturation attacks by _____ to _____ aircraft, etc. A generalized list of this sort, though drawn from SAC and navy experience, would not reveal SAC plans. Yet it would permit us to say what resistance each of these types of attack could expect to meet, and thus provide a paper directly responsive to military needs.

3. I therefore recommend that as part of the NIE 11-9-54 exercise, we ask the Joint Staff to provide us with a list of "assumptions" along the lines outlined above.

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R. W. KOMER
Acting Chief, Estimates Staff

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